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**Research and Innovative Technology Administration**  
**BTS Data**

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## **February Passenger Airline Employment Down 1.4 Percent from February 2004**

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed a total of 455,372 workers in February 2005, 1.4 percent fewer than in February 2004, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 1).

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, also reported that the seven network carriers employed 309,306 total workers, 4.4 percent fewer workers in February 2005 than a year earlier (Table 2). The low-cost carriers reported 74,405 total employees, 0.9 percent more than February 2004 (Table 3); and the regional carriers reported 59,505 total employees, 13.8 percent more than the previous year (Table 4).

Airline employment numbers have been reported by carriers meeting the reporting standard since at least 1970. This is the third in a series of press releases, including carrier groupings, designed to reflect the existing structure of the airline industry and to provide numbers to measure the growing prominence of low-cost and regional air carriers. Many regional carriers were not required to report employment numbers before 2003, so year-to-year comparisons involving regional carriers as a group, or the full industry, are not appropriate for earlier years. BTS is providing pre-2003 comparisons for network and low-cost carriers, as well as pre-2003 numbers for individual regional carriers that were required to report in earlier years.

Airlines that operate at least one aircraft with the capacity to carry combined passengers, cargo and fuel of 18,000 pounds – the payload factor – must report monthly employment statistics.

The 2004 statistics do not include employment data for one regional airline that was not required to report for that year – PSA Airlines.

Numbers for Independence Air, which changed its business model from a regional to low-cost carrier in mid-2004, have been included with low-cost carriers for both 2005 and 2004. This change reflects that carrier's current business model as a low-cost operator.

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## **AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE**

### **ADD ONE**

Using Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTE) calculations, employment at network carriers in February dropped 32.4 percent from 2001 to 2005. The biggest declines were at US Airways, down 45.6 percent; and United Airlines, down 40.9 percent (Table 5). In FTE calculations, part-time workers are counted as one-half of a full-time employee.

The seven low-cost carriers that were required to report employment data in 2001 and 2005 employed 12.6 percent more FTEs in 2005 than in 2001 (Table 6).

Of the eight regional carriers who reported employment numbers to BTS in 2001, the February FTEs increased 15.7 percent. Of that group, only Horizon Air reported fewer FTE employees in February 2005 than February 2001 (Table 7).

In this release, Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 use total numbers for full-time and part-time employees, while employee numbers in Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8 show FTEs.

The 1.4 percent drop in FTE's from February 2004 to February 2005 was the largest year-to-year drop in passenger airline employment in the three months that these numbers have been compiled (Table 8).

Network carriers operate a significant portion of their flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights to down line destinations or spoke cities. Low-cost carriers are those that the industry generally recognizes as operating under a low-cost business model with fewer infrastructure costs.

Regional carriers provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems.

The Other Carrier category generally reflects those airlines that operate within specific niche markets such as Aloha and Hawaiian Airlines in serving the Hawaiian Islands.

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of April 7.

Additional airline employment data can be found on the BTS website at [http://www.bts.gov/programs/airline\\_information/number\\_of\\_employees/](http://www.bts.gov/programs/airline_information/number_of_employees/). BTS will release March airline employment data in May.

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**AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE  
ADD TWO**

**Table 1: Passenger Airline Employment, February 2004-2005**

All Scheduled Passenger Carriers	Feb. 2004	Feb. 2005	Pct. Change 2004-2005
<b>Total (36)</b>	461,618	455,372	-1.4
<b>Full-time</b>	407,873	400,253	-1.9
<b>Part-time</b>	53,745	55,119	2.6
<b>Network Carriers (7)</b>			
<b>Total</b>	323,524	309,306	-4.4
<b>Full-time</b>	285,925	271,691	-5
<b>Part-time</b>	37,599	37,615	0.04
<b>Low Cost Carriers (8)*</b>			
<b>Total</b>	73,763	74,405	0.9
<b>Full-time</b>	67,161	67,348	0.3
<b>Part-time</b>	6,602	7,057	6.9
<b>Regional Carriers (13)**</b>			
<b>Total</b>	52,297	59,505	13.8
<b>Full-time</b>	45,975	52,343	13.9
<b>Part-time</b>	6,322	7,162	13.3
<b>Other Carriers (8)***</b>			
<b>Total</b>	12,034	12,156	1
<b>Full-time</b>	8,812	8,871	0.7
<b>Part-time</b>	3,222	3,285	2

**Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics**

\*Independence Air (formerly known as Atlantic Coast Airlines) data have been included in 2004 and 2005 totals for Low-cost Carriers, reflecting the current change in its business model.

\*\*2005 Regional data include results from one newly reporting airline that was not required to report employment data in 2004: PSA Airlines. The regional airline category, including only those airlines that reported employment data in both February 2004 and 2005, recorded a 10.6 percent growth rate.

\*\*\* Allegiant Air, Aloha Airlines, Casino Express Airlines, Continental Micronesia, Hawaiian Airlines, Midwest Airlines, TransMeridian Airlines, USA3000 Airlines.

**Table 2: Number of Employees: Network Carriers February 2001-2005  
(number of current carriers in parentheses)**

	Total	Percentage Change from previous year	Full-time	Percentage Change from previous year	Part-time	Percentage Change from previous year
<b>2001 (8)</b>	459,833	N/A	399,414	N/A	60,419	N/A
<b>2002 (7)</b>	407,052	-11.5	359,570	-10.0	47,482	-21.6
<b>2003 (7)</b>	363,146	-10.8	321,425	-10.6	41,721	-12.1
<b>2004 (7)</b>	323,524	-10.9	285,925	-11.0	37,599	-9.9
<b>2005 (7)</b>	309,306	-4.4	271,691	-5.0	37,615	0.0

**Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics**

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**AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE  
ADD THREE**

**Table 3: Number of Employees: Low-cost Carriers, February 2001-2005  
(number of current carriers in parentheses)**

	Total	Percentage Change from previous year	Full-time	Percentage Change from previous year	Part-time	Percentage Change from previous year
<b>2001 (11)</b>	68,001	N/A	60,709	N/A	7,292	N/A
<b>2002 (11)</b>	66,829	-1.8	60,412	-0.5	6,417	-12.0
<b>2003 (7)</b>	68,837	3.0	63,044	4.4	5,793	-9.7
<b>2004 (8)</b>	73,763	7.2	67,161	6.5	6,602	14.0
<b>2005 (8)</b>	74,405	0.9	67,348	0.3	7,057	6.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

**Table 4: Number of Employees: Regional Carriers, February 2003-2005  
(number of current carriers in parentheses)**

	Total	Percentage Change from previous year	Full-time	Percentage Change from previous year	Part-time	Percentage Change from previous year
<b>2003 (11)</b>	44,557	N/A	38,860	N/A	5,697	N/A
<b>2004 (13)</b>	52,297	17.4	45,975	18.3	6,322	11.0
<b>2005 (13)</b>	59,505	13.8	52,343	13.9	7,162	13.3

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

NOTE: Regional group numbers for years before 2003 are not included because of the limited number of regional carriers that met the requirement for filing reports.

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**AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE  
ADD FOUR**

**Table 5: Network Carrier FTE Employees, February 2001-2005\***

Rank		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percentage Full-time Employees	
							2001	2005
1	<b>American**</b>	117,416	96,944	95,185	79,186	75,688	86.5	86.4
2	<b>United</b>	96,280	78,013	69,157	58,620	56,910	89.2	88.7
3	<b>Delta</b>	73,362	65,878	61,928	58,116	54,530	82.1	88.7
4	<b>Northwest</b>	51,869	43,608	42,467	38,307	38,400	93.7	94.7
5	<b>Continental</b>	41,258	35,887	35,720	34,266	31,830	78.9	80.0
6	<b>USAirways</b>	43,997	34,060	27,689	26,282	23,953	91.0	88.3
7	<b>Alaska</b>	9,944	9,824	10,141	9,949	9,189	88.1	88.6
	<b>Total***</b>	<b>429,624</b>	<b>383,311</b>	<b>342,286</b>	<b>304,725</b>	<b>290,499</b>	<b>86.9</b>	<b>87.8</b>

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

\* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count part-time workers as one-half of a full-time employee.

\*\* American Airlines' 2001 employment statistics include TWA employees that were absorbed by AA after its purchase of TWA assets in April 2001.

\*\*\* Total numbers for carriers operating in 2005.

**Table 6: Low-cost Carrier FTE Employees, February 2001-2005\***

Rank		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percentage Full-time Employees	
							2001	2005
1	<b>Southwest</b>	29,465	31,898	33,527	31,611	30,934	97.3	98.4
2	<b>America West</b>	13,072	11,125	11,533	11,351	11,560	80.7	78.6
3	<b>JetBlue</b>	1,320	2,337	3,861	5,320	6,871	74.1	81.2
4	<b>AirTran</b>	4,053	4,244	4,862	5,325	5,933	91.3	94.6
5	<b>ATA</b>	7,680	6,905	6,968	6,997	5,437	88.1	89.7
6	<b>Frontier</b>	2,190	2,270	2,796	3,616	4,077	81.0	80.6
7	<b>Independence**</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,854	3,711	N/A	92.7
8	<b>Spirit</b>	1,881	1,989	2,395	2,390	2,354	82.3	88.3
	<b>Total***</b>	<b>59,661</b>	<b>60,768</b>	<b>65,941</b>	<b>70,462</b>	<b>70,877</b>	<b>90.2</b>	<b>90.5</b>

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

\* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count part-time workers as one-half of a full-time employee.

\*\* Employment numbers in 2004 and 2005 for Independence Air, which changed its business model from a regional to low-cost carrier in mid-2004, are included with low-cost carriers. The carrier did not meet the standard for filing in previous years.

\*\*\* Total numbers for carriers operating in 2005.

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**AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE  
ADD FIVE**

**Table 7: Regional Carrier FTE Employees, February 2000-2004\***

Rank		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percentage Full-time Employees	
							2001	2005
1	<b>American Eagle</b>	8,887	8,510	7,781	7,794	9,373	87.1	87.7
2	<b>Sky West</b>	N/A	N/A	5,224	5,895	7,329	N/A	86.5
3	<b>Express Jet</b>	4,694	N/A	5,418	5,898	6,456	90.1	91.7
4	<b>Comair</b>	N/A	N/A	5,191	5,790	6,174	N/A	92.1
5	<b>Atlantic Southeast</b>	4,067	4,329	5,198	5,449	5,415	93.2	94.1
6	<b>Air Wisconsin</b>	2,819	2,838	2,974	3,315	3,644	89.2	92.3
7	<b>Horizon</b>	3,875	3,419	3,390	3,376	3,341	85.3	87.4
8	<b>Mesaba</b>	3,164	3,153	3,159	2,904	3,283	76.9	76.6
9	<b>Mesa</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,378	3,178	N/A	98.7
10	<b>Pinnacle</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,991	2,753	N/A	68.8
11	<b>Executive</b>	1,256	1,249	1,964	1,876	1,786	73.3	78.2
12	<b>PSA</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,758	N/A	84.1
13	<b>Trans States</b>	1,248	997	1,176	1,270	1,436	88.2	95.1
	<b>Total**</b>	<b>30,008</b>	<b>24,492</b>	<b>41,474</b>	<b>48,932</b>	<b>55,924</b>	<b>86.6</b>	<b>88.0</b>

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Many regional carriers were not required to report employment numbers before 2003 so year-to-year comparisons involving regional carriers as a group, or the full industry, are not appropriate for earlier years.

\* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count part-time workers as one-half of a full-time employee.

\*\* Total numbers for carriers operating in 2005.

N/A: Carriers did not meet the standard for filing.

**Table 8: Change in FTE Employees from the Previous Year\***

Percentage change compared to same month the previous year

Month	Network Carriers	Low-Cost Carriers**	Regional Carriers***	All Passenger Airlines****
<b>Dec. 2003-Dec. 2004</b>	-3.5	0.5	30.6	1.1
<b>Jan. 2004-Jan. 2005</b>	-4.3	0.5	14.9	-1.1
<b>Feb. 2004-Feb. 2005</b>	-4.4	0.9	13.8	-1.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

\* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count part-time workers as one-half of a full-time employee.

\*\*Employment numbers in 2004 and 2005 for Independence Air, which changed its business model from a regional to low-cost carrier in mid-2004, are included with low-cost carriers.

\*\*\*2005 Regional data include results from one newly reporting airline that was not required to report employment data in 2004: PSA Airlines. The regional airline category, including only those airlines that reported employment data in both February 2004 and 2005, recorded a 10.6 percent growth rate.

\*\*\*\* Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

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